

AGRICULTURAL QUARANTINE INSPECTION

PROGRAM PROFILE

Goal	To maintain the risk of introduction of agricultural pests and diseases into the U.S. at acceptable levels to protect American agricultural resources, maintain marketability of agricultural products, and facilitate the movement of people and commodities across the borders.
Enabling Legislation	7 U.S.C. 151 et. seq. (Plant Quarantine Act of 1912); 7 U.S.C. 150aa-150jj (Federal Plant Pest Act of 1957); PL 87-46 (civil penalties). Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, P.L. No. 101-624, Sect. © 2509 (User Fees), 104 Stat. 4069-4073 (1990), Federal Agriculture Improvement & Reform Act of 1996, P.L. 104-127, Sect. 504.
Economic Significance	Protects the multi-billion dollar U.S. agricultural industry. Intercepts many of the world's most destructive insects, plant diseases, snails, nematodes, and mites through baggage, cargo, and carrier inspections. Tons of meat products from countries infected with foot-and-mouth disease, rinderpest, African swine fever, and hog cholera are intercepted in baggage each year. Enhances U.S. agricultural exports valued at about \$40 billion in 1991 through phytosanitary certification.
Principal Approach And Methods	Inspection and regulation of imported cargo and international air and sea passengers at ports-of-entry and preclearance locations overseas; inspection of cargo and people at the Mexican and Canadian borders; screening of carriers and mail; regulation of garbage from carriers; physical and chemical treatments; detector dogs and x-ray machines at airports and post offices; accelerated passenger clearance systems, such as Automated Passenger Information Systems, at airports; assessing civil penalties. In cooperation with the U.S. Customs Service and the Department of Defense, APHIS conducts military preclearance operations in all the major military commands. This involves inspection of troops and their personal gear and the cleaning of

military vehicles and other cargo before their return to the United States.

History

The program began in 1913. Since USDA began port-of-entry inspection, the volume of cargo and air passenger traffic entering the country has increased dramatically. In FY 1994, 62 million passengers arrived at U.S. ports-of-entry. Passengers, their baggage, and packages arrive by airplanes, boat, other vehicles, or on foot. During FY 1990, APHIS and U.S. Postal Service initiated a project to inspect first-class mail from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland for prohibited agricultural products. Federal search warrants are required for each inspection of domestic first class mail due to privacy considerations. The program is highly successful even with this burden.

State and Local Cooperation

Many States cooperate in carrying out various AQI program functions, particularly export certification.

Involvement of Other Agencies

U.S. Customs Service, Department of Defense, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service assist in inspection.

RESOURCE DATA

-----Obligations-----

	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Reimbursement</u>	<u>User Fees</u>	<u>Staff-Years</u>
FY 1996	24,838,321	14,782,555	118,477,862	2,618
FY 1997	26,580,823	17,086,486	130,937,886	2,501
FY 1998	27,079,753	18,158,648	140,094,753	2,540
FY 1999 (est)	30,648,000	19,265,000	88,000,000	2,700
FY 2000 (est)	34,576,000	19,941,000	95,000,000	2,750

	APHIS	Coop	Total	CCC	Contingency Fund
Cumulative	\$1,667,181,477	\$111,994,358	\$1,779,175,835	--	--

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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Revenue Collections	APHIS collected approximately \$151.8 million in user fee revenue for AQI services in FY 1998. Since the implementation of user fees in FY 1991, the Agency has collected about \$829 million in fees.
Passenger Inspections	In FY 1998, APHIS inspected approximately 76 million international air, maritime and land border passengers/pedestrians arriving in the United States, and predeparture and preclearance passengers in Hawaii, Puerto Rico and abroad. This is an increase of 4.4 million from the prior year. Passenger arrivals are projected to steadily increase for the foreseeable future. Processing the increasing number of international travelers continues to present many challenges to all Federal clearance agencies.
Border Passenger Processing	APHIS is participating with other Federal inspection agencies including the United States Customs Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the State Department, in a Border Passenger Processing Re-engineering Initiative. This Federal Inspection Services (FIS) Partnership initiative was implemented to jointly examine ways to expedite passenger processing while maintaining or increasing compliance with current U.S. laws and regulations. In FY 1998, the FIS partnership focused efforts on improving customer service through compliance education. New educational materials such as videos and customized brochures were developed to help international travelers understand U.S. laws and regulations when entering the country. Interactive stakeholders meetings were conducted at ports of entry to increase awareness of the Agency's mission to prevent introductions of exotic plant and animal pests and diseases.
Passenger Analytical Units	APHIS continued participating in Passenger Analytical Units (PAU's) at airports. These units use advance passenger information to target high risk-passengers while allowing the vast majority of compliant passengers to proceed quickly through the Federal inspection process. Dedicated commuter lanes were established at land border ports of entry on the northern and southern borders to facilitate frequent travelers between the U.S. and Mexico or Canada.

Controlling Passenger Movement	APHIS maintained a selective examination of passengers and baggage using “rovers” and “choke points” to control passenger movement. The Agency also continued utilizing the Interagency Border Inspection System (IBIS), which enables inspectors to identify individuals with violations histories, to expedite passenger clearance and improve inspection effectiveness.
Classical Swine Fever outbreak	APHIS implemented 100 percent inspections of passengers and baggage arriving at the Newark and San Juan airports from the Dominican Republic and Haiti due to an outbreak of classical swine fever (CSF) in these two countries. These enhanced inspections are provided to prevent the reintroduction of CSF into the United States. An outbreak of CSF in the U.S. could result in production and export losses of \$1-7 billion, displaced farm and production workers, and increased pork prices for U.S. consumers.
Baggage Screening	APHIS maintained 58 trained dog teams at 21 major airports and post offices in the United States. All canine training occurred at the Agency’s National Detector Dog Training Center in Orlando, Florida. This program is helping the Agency attain its goal of expanding the number of detector dog teams to 108 by the year 2000. APHIS also began plans to extend the training facility services to other countries interested in detector dog training such as Australia, Canada, and Chile.
X-ray Equipment	The Agency maintained X-ray equipment as a screening tool in passenger baggage clearance at major international airports. There are X-ray scanning machines located at all foreign- arrival and predeparture sites. X-ray machines are utilized at international airports including: San Juan, Miami, Honolulu, Chicago, Kennedy (New York), Houston, Dallas, Boston, Atlanta, Dulles (Washington, DC), Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle-Tacoma, Philadelphia, Orlando, and Newark; and San Ysidro, Otay Mesa, and Nogales land border ports on the U.S.-Mexico border. The scanning units are located at Ponce, Roosevelt Roads, Aguadilla, and San Juan, Puerto Rico, and four Hawaiian Islands for predeparture clearances. X-ray machines are used in two postal facilities. The Agency continued working with the U.S. Army to develop new x-ray technology which can detect agricultural products in baggage based on atomic

makeup and shape using neural network software. Due to technical changes, testing of an x-ray prototype in San Juan, Puerto Rico has been delayed until June 1999.

Cargo Clearance

APHIS inspects cargo and carriers entering the United States. In FY 1998, APHIS conducted inspections and clearances of about 61,387 ships and 1,197,045 regulated and miscellaneous cargo shipments.

APHIS participated with Customs and maritime and air cargo lines and importers in the Automated Commercial System (ACS) for electronic transmission of cargo data and entry documents. APHIS maintained electronic equipment at 33 maritime locations and 26 airports. In addition, the Agency continued to expand and improve an automated hold system for regulated cargo. The new Automatic Targeting System (ATS) will place holds on cargo based on entry and manifest data stored in ACS and the Agency's regulation criteria. The ATS will facilitate trade by expediting tracking and enforcement of regulated agricultural commodities.

Regulatory Enforcement

APHIS' FY 1998 activities included efforts to increase enforcement of agricultural regulations. The Agency conducted compliance blitzes as part of multi-agency Trade Compliance Teams to search for prohibited items in U.S. markets. The Trade Compliance Teams identified prohibited items such as sweetened condensed milk from eastern European block countries, and soup mixes containing meat and ruminant products from BSE infected countries. The compliance teams are coordinating entry status requirements between APHIS, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, and the Food and Drug Administration.

As part of APHIS' Results Monitoring System, the Agency monitored the rate at which items of agricultural significance entered U.S. ports-of-entry. This information is intended to improve the risk management decision making process and enable program managers to allocate resources to entry paths at high-risk for foreign agricultural items. In FY 1998, the Results Monitoring System collected compliance data at all U.S. international airports, north and south border ports, and maritime, land and air cargo ports.

The data reported a FY 1998 compliance rate of 94.4 percent for international air travelers, 95.6 percent for border vehicles, and 95.5 percent for cargo. In FY 1998, APHIS also began collecting data for additional AQI pathways such as foreign bulk mail, private aircraft, foreign buses, and railway cars. Compliance reports for these new pathways will be available in FY 1999.

To help enforce compliance, APHIS uses its civil penalty authority for inadequate notice of arrivals, passenger baggage violations, and maritime garbage violations. In FY 1998, APHIS collected about \$1.1 million in violations, assessing approximately 19,383 civil penalties.

Export Certification

The EXCERPT system, a computerized database of export certification information, completed its fifth year of operation. This database facilitates U.S. export trade by providing certifying officials with on-line export summaries which provide information for issuing phytosanitary certificates. In FY 1998, the system was expanded to include summaries for 6 new countries increasing the total number of countries for which export certification data is available to 221. The system is used by over 2,500 certifying officials. In FY 1998, approximately 300,000 certificates were issued expediting trade for over \$20 billion of agricultural exports.

Preclearance

In FY 1998, 3,101,295 passengers were precleared and 41,512 contraband interceptions were made for Bahamas and Bermuda air passengers. Preclearance at domestic and overseas locations provides a high level of protection to U.S. agriculture.

Through trust fund agreements with major exporting groups, APHIS also conducted preclearance inspections of fruits, vegetables, and a limited amount of propagative material in 27 countries worldwide. Commodity preclearance overseas provides the U.S. with additional protection against the introduction of exotic plant pests and diseases by detecting and eliminating pests at their origin. Significant preclearance inspection activities occur in Chile, a major supplier of winter fruits and vegetables to the United States, and the Netherlands, a major supplier of flower bulbs. Preclearance programs for mangoes subject

to hot water treatment also continued in Mexico, Haiti, Brazil, Guatemala, Venezuela, Peru, and Ecuador.

APHIS maintained an ongoing preclearance program in Germany, and continued an inspection training program for military personnel in the European Command. Approximately 200 military personnel were trained to assist APHIS in inspecting military cargo, vehicles, household goods, and personal effects being retrograded back to the United States.

APHIS conducted baggage inspections for 1.5 million passengers from 18,772 aircraft at Tijuana International Airport in Mexico where 25.9 tons of contraband fruit were seized and 3,551 fruit fly were intercepted. At the Tijuana Central Bus Terminal, APHIS inspections of 16,340 buses yielded 5.84 tons of contraband fruit and 334 fruit fly larvae. In addition, APHIS performed 4,115 commercial market compliance inspections in the Tijuana metropolitan area. At the agriculture quarantine road stations in Estacion Don, Sonora, APHIS inspected 58,527 buses, 232,003 passenger cars, and 44 passenger trains. From these inspections a total of 134 tons of contraband fruit was seized and 1,995 fruit fly larvae were intercepted. Additionally, 337,920 commercial transport vehicles were inspected, 28,728 tons of commercial fruit were fumigated, and 726 tons of commercial fruit were refused entry into the Sonora Fruit Fly Free Zone. A total of 5,228 fruit fly larvae were intercepted from commercial shipments.